

Local Worshipers, Imperial Patrons: Pilgrimage to St. Eugenios of Trebizond

JAN OLOF ROSENQVIST

The long history of the cult of the Trapezuntine martyr St. Eugenios and his three lesser companions is vividly reflected in the collections of their miracles and, somewhat less vividly, in the various versions of their Passions.¹ However, exploring this cult in the context of pilgrimage to shrines in Asia Minor may not seem the most obvious approach when studying these texts. To judge from them, pilgrimage, in the normal sense of the word, does not seem to have been the first priority of those responsible for the organization of the cult at any time of its history. Other martyrs of the area prepared the ground for the development of their shrines into pilgrimage centers with a carefulness that has no parallel in the texts about St. Eugenios. In more than one sense, St. Eustratios of Armenian Arauraka is a case in point.

In the *Passio* of Eustratios and his four companions we are told that, when his execution was close at hand, he dictated a testament in which he provided for all the prerequisites necessary for the desirable development. The testament prescribed that the remains of Eustratios and his fellow martyrs should be buried intact at a certain place called Analibozora in the *polichne* of Arauraka, and that the yield of his estate should be used to feed those in charge of his martyrion. This foresighted document was attested by the bishop of Sebasteia, who was given the responsibility to transport the bodies of Eustratios himself and Orestes, one of his companions, back to Arauraka. The following day, which was the 13th of December, he died in the furnace prepared for him. The bishop took care of his

My sincere thanks are due to Professor Anthony Bryer and an anonymous reader whose incisive remarks and criticisms on an earlier version of this article have contributed substantially to its improvement. Since the results of their suggestions are ubiquitous, I have—with one or two exceptions—abstained from acknowledging my debt to them in every case where this would have been motivated.

¹ For the miracle collections, see J. O. Rosenqvist, *The Hagiographic Dossier of St. Eugenios of Trebizond*, *Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia* 5 (Uppsala, 1996). The oldest Greek *Passio* was edited by B. Martin-Hisard, “Les textes anonymes grec et arménien de la *Passion d’Eugène, Valérien, Canidios et Akylas de Trébizonde*,” *REArm*, n.s. 15 (1981): 115–85 (Greek text on 117–46; annotated French translation on 147–64); and, independently, by Od. Lampsides, in “Άγιος Εὐγένιος ὁ πολιοῦχος τῆς Τραπεζοῦντος (Athens, 1984), 53–75. A reworking of the *Passio* by John Xiphilinos was edited by Od. Lampsides, “Άγιος Εὐγένιος ὁ Τραπεζοῦντος. Α΄.—Τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ ἁγίου Εὐγενίου ὑπὸ Ἰωάννου Ξιφιλίνου,” *Άρχ.Πόντ.* 18 (1953): 129–67; repr. with corrections in Lampsides, “Άγιος Εὐγένιος ὁ πολιοῦχος, 19–43. See also the *Enkomion* on the martyrs by Constantine Loukites (first half of 14th century), which retells the story of the Passions in a rhetorically refined form and with some additional pieces of information (text in Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 114–68).

body and performed the prescriptions in his testament.² After all these careful pre-arrangements, the cult was bound to be a success. The shrine at Arauraka became one of the most frequented pilgrimage sites in Asia Minor. The martyrs' popularity reached Naples and Rome, where their relics are reported to have been brought in the eighth century, and their *Passio* was translated into various languages, including Latin, Armenian, and Georgian.³ Only the difficult times during the Seljuk invasion in the eleventh century seem to have put an end to this success story.

Apart from providing a contrasting example, there is a more specific reason why some words about St. Eustratios of Arauraka may be justified as introduction to a contribution concerned with St. Eugenios of Trebizond. In fact, the *Passio* of Eustratios and his companions seems, to a considerable extent, to have been the model for the *Passio* of Eugenios and his companions.⁴ Both martyrdoms took place under the emperors Diocletian and Maximian, in largely the same geographical area, and in similar circumstances. In both instances a group of martyrs, rather than one individual martyr, is involved. What is more, the very character of Eugenios of Trebizond seems to represent a development of one of the lesser characters in Eustratios's story. This is a young man whom the *Passio* of Eustratios presents as a civil officer (*offikialios*) at the praetorium of Arauraka, and who also bears the name Eugenios.⁵ A comparison of the two, in some points, may therefore be instructive.

The *Passio* of Eugenios of Trebizond, in the oldest form in which we have it in Greek,⁶ presents the four martyrs—Eugenios himself, Valerianos, Kanidios, and Akylas (Lat. Aquila)—as teachers of the Christians. The social position of Eugenios himself is left undefined, whereas his companions appear to be peasants. We are told that their missionary activities in the area of Trebizond have proved especially dangerous to the Roman army stationed in Armenia. Information is laid against them by people who are enticed by the money awards promised by the imperial authorities, represented in the first place by the *doux* Lysias, a stock figure in hagiography from this region, who plays his usual role of being responsible for the management of the persecutions. Eugenios's companions are seized one by one in the Pontic countryside and brought to Trebizond along with a group of Christian soldiers who are being sent into exile as punishment for their religious conversion. As the last among the four, Eugenios is discovered in his hiding place Akanthai ("The Thorns") in Trebizond. After the usual tortures, including a burning furnace, first his three companions are decapitated, and then Eugenios himself.

² See the edition of this *Passio* (BHG 646) in PG 116:468–505. The final part summarized above begins at col. 501b. The text is included in the Metaphrasteian menologion but is, in fact, an old text that was taken over virtually unchanged by Metaphrastes.

³ A. Bryer and D. Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos*, DOS 20 (Washington, D.C., 1985), 166–67, with references in note 14.

⁴ This fact was noted by Lampsides in his edition of the reworking of the *Passio* by Xiphilinos, "Ἅγιος Εὐγένιος ὁ Τραπεζούντιος. Α΄," 138f. (in the reprint in Lampsides, Ἅγιος Εὐγένιος ὁ πολιοῦχος, 19f.). The whole question, including that of connections with other Pontic hagiography, is the subject of a substantial discussion by Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 166–69. Some aspects of this discussion—especially on further sources of the *Passio*—were developed by J. O. Rosenqvist, "Some Remarks on the Passions of St. Eugenios of Trebizond and Their Sources," *AB* 107 (1989): 39–64, esp. 50–62.

⁵ PG 116:477c.

⁶ BHG 608y, as edited by Martin-Hisard, "Les textes anonymes," and by Lampsides, Ἅγιος Εὐγένιος ὁ πολιοῦχος, 53–75.

Nothing indicates that the *Passio* of Eugenios is anything else than what Hippolyte Delehaye called an epic *Passio*, a literary construction with a strongly compilatory character, written, perhaps, in the sixth century, or in any case long after the events described in it.⁷ As will have appeared already, the character of Eugenios himself is a literary borrowing, and even as such he is remarkably vague in his outlook. This, along with the fact that Eugenios and his companions enter the story at a point where the Roman army in general, and a detachment of *limitanei* more especially, have been in focus, and are brought to trial in the company of a group of soldiers converted to Christianity, appears to have caused some confusion concerning what kind of person the martyr was. Thus he is often thought to have been a soldier himself, although it is easy to see that he and his fellow martyrs do not belong to the military. A first trace of this misunderstanding appears, by implication, in the Synaxarion of Constantinople.⁸ It has left several traces in later iconography (on which more will be said below), in later medieval literature, and in modern literature.⁹ Actually, however, this mistake has had the positive result of affording Eugenios something he is lacking in the *Passiones*: a more or less clear-cut personality.

In contrast to the *Passio* of Eustratios, the *Passio* of Eugenios leaves us in the dark as regards all those details that are essential for the development of a martyr's cult and a pilgrimage center. In fact, we do not even learn the day of Eugenios's death. This is only found in a colophon in the unique eleventh-century manuscript by which the text has been transmitted. In addition to providing this important piece of information, the scribe there complains about the difficulties in finding a copy of the text, difficulties to which he refers as an excuse for having copied the *Passio* at the wrong place in the manuscript.¹⁰ Perhaps he drew the information about the date—21 January—from a synaxarion.

Not only is the date unclear, however, but even about the places of the martyrs' burials we are informed in a highly obscure way. About the three companions of Eugenios we are told that their relics were brought separately to the home village of each, which would mean that the remains of Kanidios were brought to Solochaina, those of Valerianos to Ediska (also written Sediska or Sedissa), and those of Akylas to Ediska too or, perhaps, to Godaina.¹¹ The *Passio* further states that those responsible for this "expected to erect martyria for the saints when the persecutions were over."¹² However, we do not learn whether this really happened. Even about the place of Eugenios's own burial the *Passio* lacks precision. We learn that his remains were brought into the city (of Trebizond) and laid down "at a marked [ἐπισήμῳ] place," and further that, when the emperors Diocletian and Maximian

⁷ Rosenqvist, "Some Remarks," 62–64.

⁸ Rosenqvist, "Some Remarks," 54 note 62.

⁹ This modern literature includes, unfortunately, some of my own publications, for example, Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 67.

¹⁰ Ed. Martin-Hisard, chap. 30.25ff. (p. 146); ed. Lampsides, lines 722–24 (p. 75): καὶ διὰ τὸ μὴ γράφεσθαι καθ' εἰρμὸν ἡμᾶς μηδεὶς μεμψέσθω, ὅτι ἐρευνῶντες πανταχοῦ καὶ εὕρισκοντες τὰ εὕρισκόμενα ἐγράφαμεν. The manuscript—Chalki, Theol. School 100—is a menologion for the whole year in which the *Passio* of Eugenios appears after texts for 31 March and 26 April (Lampsides, Ἅγιος Εὐγένιος ὁ πολιοῦχος, 49f.).

¹¹ The last point does not appear in the *Passiones*—which associate both Valerianos and Akylas loosely with Ediska—but only in the *Enkomion* by Constantine Loukites; see the edition in Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 166, lines 882f. (p. 166) and the commentary on pp. 371f.

¹² Ed. Martin-Hisard, chap. 25.19–21 (p. 142); ed. Lampsides, lines 626f. (p. 71): προσδοκῶντες μετὰ τὸ παυθῆναι τοὺς διωγμοὺς μαρτύρια ἀναστῆναι τοῖς ἁγίοις.

were dead, “the Christians began to come out and build churches and martyria to God’s glory.”¹³ There is no information here of the kind we would expect in such a context, that is, a clear reference to the martyr’s relics being preserved in his own church in Trebizond, working miracles, and so on.

Whether this curious situation will eventually be illuminated by a remarkable rediscovery that has recently been made at Satala—the place that was the center of the persecutions that eventually brought about the martyrdom of Eugenios and his companions¹⁴—remains unclear. What has generally been regarded as the remnants of an aqueduct situated southeast of the fortress of this Roman city has now been conclusively identified as a large basilica¹⁵ (the same interpretation of the evidence was made already in 1874, although it remained unpublished until 1974).¹⁶ According to the recent survey of the site by C. Lightfoot, the structure is likely to have been an early Christian church, and in a preliminary report Lightfoot cautiously speculates that it was dedicated to St. Eugenios.¹⁷ Further work on the site will perhaps show whether this idea can be substantiated in any way.

Satala appears to have been abandoned for good soon after the city was taken by Chosroes II in A.D. 610. If St. Eugenios enjoyed an early cult there, the connection between the martyr and Trebizond established by the old *Passio* (where Eugenios confirms his Trapezuntine identity when he is interrogated by the judge Lysias)¹⁸ would, perhaps, appear somewhat less unambiguous. But it must be stressed that, in spite of the apparent vagueness with which the *Passio* links the important facts of the martyrdom of St. Eugenios to Trebizond, all our earliest evidence connects the martyr himself as well as his cult with this city. Apart from the *Passio*, which is probably a late antique composition,¹⁹ two independent pieces of evidence may be cited. The first is a passage in Prokopios’s *Buildings* (mid-6th century), where the historian mentions, not a church, but an aqueduct of “the Martyr Eugenios” in Trebizond.²⁰ The second is provided by the so-called *Autobiography* of the Armenian scholar Ananias of Širak. In this short work the learned Armenian describes how he went to Trebizond in order to enjoy the instruction of a certain Tychikos, a learned man and owner of a large library whom he found “at the shrine of Saint Eugenia [obvi-

¹³ Ed. Martin-Hisard, chap. 30.15 and 20–22 (p. 146); ed. Lampsides, lines 714 (p. 74) and 719f. (p. 75).

¹⁴ In the old *Passio* of Eugenios, people from Trebizond visit Lysias, then residing in Satala, in order to inform against the martyrs; ed. Martin-Hisard, chap. 5.9ff. (p. 124); ed. Lampsides, lines 183ff. (p. 58).

¹⁵ C. Lightfoot, “Survey Work at Satala: A Roman Legionary Fortress in North-East Turkey,” in R. Matthews, ed., *Ancient Anatolia: Fifty Years’ Work by the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara* (London, n.d. [1999]), 273–84, esp. 279. I am indebted to Dr. Eric Ivison for information on this point and for this reference.

¹⁶ The interpretation of the remains as representing a basilica had been made by Alfred Biliotti, British vice-consul in Trebizond, who spent nine days at Satala in August and September 1874. However, his report went unnoticed until it was published one hundred years later; see T. B. Mitford, “Biliotti’s Excavations at Satala,” *AnatSt* 23/24 (1974): 221–44, esp. 233–35 (Biliotti’s interpretation failed to convince the editor; see his rejecting remark in footnote 13, p. 235).

¹⁷ Lightfoot, “Survey Work at Satala,” 279. The author cites no evidence for his view in this preliminary publication. In contrast, Alfred Biliotti (see preceding note) thought that the building was intended for secular purposes.

¹⁸ Anonymous *Passio*, ed. Martin-Hisard, chap. 16.1–2 (p. 134); ed. Lampsides, lines 422–23 (p. 65). In a later source, the miracle collection called *Logos on St. Eugenios’s Birthday* by John Lazaropoulos, we are told that he grew up near a place called Akanthai outside the eastern city wall where he hid in a cave before his arrest; see the edition in Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, lines 107–11 (p. 210).

¹⁹ Rosenqvist, “Some Remarks,” 62–64.

²⁰ Prokopios, *Περὶ κτισμάτων*, 3.7.1: ὁχετόν . . . ὅνπερ Εὐγενίου καλοῦσι μάρτυρος.

ously an error for Eugenios].”²¹ This happened, apparently, ca. A.D. 600. Whatever the role of Satala in the history of the martyr, it is obvious that his cult was firmly rooted in Trebizond from as early a date as our sources allow us to trace its existence.

In his rewriting of the old *Passio*, produced in the early eleventh century,²² the later patriarch John Xiphilinos, who hailed from Trebizond, added a few points aimed at strengthening the links between Eugenios and his own native city. As for Eugenios’s companions, we learn from Xiphilinos that their relics received a befitting burial in the home village of each and that they were thereafter an ever-flowing source of healings.²³ This certainly seems to indicate that Xiphilinos knew of a cult of the three companions, but to judge from the way in which he describes the situation, his knowledge was limited to one of the three places: the only village he mentions by name is Solochaina, the home village of Kanidios, although even about this village his wording is vague and noncommittal.²⁴ The fact that Kanidios’s native Solochaina alone among these villages is mentioned by Xiphilinos is, however, significant since there is a piece of independent evidence confirming the cult of Kanidios there: a reliquary of his head which is now preserved in a refugee village near Panayitsa, Edessa, in northern Greece.²⁵

Concerning Eugenios himself, Xiphilinos tells us that he was buried by five pious men (whose names are indicated) near the place where he was executed.²⁶ Again, nothing is said about his church, about miracles being worked by his relics, and so on. In the case of Xiphilinos this cannot be due to any lack of knowledge. This is shown by the simple fact that he also composed a small collection of miracles of the martyr, a kind of literature in which such facts are, of course, taken for granted. He might well have thought that the information about the cult center found in this collection was sufficient. Still it remains striking that even in its new form the *Passio* lacks so much of what we would expect from the basic document of a martyr’s cult. As far as the *Passiones* are concerned, therefore, all adds up to the conclusion that, up to the first quarter of the eleventh century, the propagation of St. Eugenios’s church and monastery as a pilgrimage center was not felt to be of major importance in Trebizond.

Far more important than the *Passiones* for the history of the cult of Eugenios are, however, the collections of his Miracles. Three such collections have survived: the one by John Xiphilinos mentioned above, which contains ten separate miracles,²⁷ and two bigger ones by the Trapezuntine John Lazaropoulos, who was metropolitan of his native city during a short period in the 1360s.²⁸ The material found in these collections represents various periods, primarily the ninth to the early eleventh century and the thirteenth to the mid-

²¹ See F. C. Conybeare, “Ananias of Shirak (A.D. 600–650 ca.),” *BZ* 6 (1906): 572–84 (translation of the *Autobiography*, pp. 572–74), here 573; also H. Berbérien, “Autobiographie d’Anania Širakac’i,” *REArm* 1 (1964): 191–94.

²² Ed. Lampsides, “Ἅγιος Εὐγένιος ὁ πολιοῦχος, 19–43.

²³ Ed. cit., lines 583–85 (p. 40).

²⁴ Ed. cit., lines 580f.

²⁵ I am grateful to Professor Bryer for kindly informing me about this. It may be significant that Kanidios is the only one among the companions of Eugenios whose local connection is clear-cut already in the old *Passio*.

²⁶ Ed. cit., lines 652–55 (p. 43). The five men were called Sophronios, Antiochos, Theodore, Anysios, and Herakleios.

²⁷ Edition with facing English translation in Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 170–203.

²⁸ Editions with facing English translations, *ibid.*, 204–45 (*Logos*), and 246–359 (*Synopsis*).

fourteenth century. On the whole, the chronological contexts seem fairly clear, although the exact dating of each individual miracle is often difficult. In contrast, the miracles by Xiphilinos are chronologically homogeneous in that they all take place in the early decades of the eleventh century.

In general these collections confirm the conclusion already drawn from the evidence of the *Passiones*: the cult of St. Eugenios remained a local affair. Any ambition to initiate a different development seems to have been lacking, with one interesting exception. According to one of the miracles told by Lazaropoulos, an attempt was made to establish the martyr's birthday as a festival in addition to the day of his death.²⁹ This was no doubt because his birthday—allegedly 24 June—is much more attractive to pilgrims, as it is to any visitors to Trebizond, than the day of Eugenios's death, 21 January.³⁰ According to the first part of this fascinating miracle, this attempt at a reform happened in the early ninth century as the result of a revelation. In connection with the Seljuk invasion in the latter half of the eleventh century—still according to the miracle—the new festival was forgotten. Finally, as the second part of the miracle goes on to tell, an attempt was made to bring it into life again in the early fourteenth century, by the Trapezuntine ruler, Alexios II Grand Komnenos. Actually, the point in telling its prehistory in the ninth century is obviously to give a historical justification for the festival by presenting it not as a renewal but as the continuation of a forgotten tradition.

There are strong legendary elements in both parts of this story. One of the most striking and the most puzzling is the martyr's efficient support of Alexios in fighting a dragon in the mountains south of Trebizond. But whatever the historical foundation on which this double miracle story relies, the attempted innovation was, at best, just a temporary success in the ninth century, and no success at all in the fourteenth century. According to our sources, which happen to be relatively rich for the fourteenth century, and partly of a documentary character—I am referring here to the liturgical typikon of the martyr's own monastery which is found in a manuscript dated 1346³¹—this second attempt seems also to have failed. Apparently, not even imperial sponsorship was a guarantee for the successful development of the pilgrimage to St. Eugenios. We know nothing about the reasons for this failure. One may have been the fact—emphasized in the story itself and probably thought to give impetus to the new festival—that it coincided with the birthday feast of a superior competitor, namely, St. John the Baptist. After all, the ingenious plan of having St. Eugenios profit from the proximity of St. John in the calendar may not have been a very good one. The fact that the birthday of St. John was a kind of national holiday in the Pontos would not have made competition easier.³²

²⁹ Lazaropoulos, *Logos*, ed. cit., pp. 206–28. Cf. the overall discussion of this Miracle, *ibid.*, 75–81.

³⁰ As pointed out by R. Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (Paris, 1975), 266, with note 9. See further Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 169.

³¹ The text of this typikon was edited by A. Dmitrievskii, *Opisanie liturgicheskikh rukopisei khраниashchikhsia v bibliotekakh pravoslavnogo vostoka*, 3, *Typika*, vol. 2 (Petrograd, 1917), 421–57. The better-known illuminations in this manuscript ("Labors of the Months") were published by J. Strzygowski, "Eine trapezuntische Bilderhandschrift vom Jahre 1346," *Archiv für Kunstwissenschaft* 13 (1890): 241–63. On the contents of these illuminations from the point of view of agricultural history, see A. Bryer, "The Estates of the Empire of Trebizond," *Ἀρχ. Πόντ.* 35 (1979): 370–477 (= A. Bryer, *The Empire of Trebizond and the Pontos* [London, 1980], no. VII), here 392–413.

³² Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 169 (noting that traces of this holiday may still be observed in Turkish Trabzon).

In this attempted development of the cult in the fourteenth century, the emperor is obviously instrumental. This fact is indicative of a shift that the cult of St. Eugenios, as well as the character of the martyr himself, seems to have experienced by this period. The shift of the cult was from popular to imperial, the shift of the martyr from being a protector and helper in private and monastic affairs to being the official patron of the state. This is the impression left by the way in which the various periods in the cult's history are reflected in the miracles, as far as they can be dated with any reasonable degree of certainty. As expressly stated by the miracles themselves, there was a break in the continuity of the cult in connection with the Seljuk invasion of Anatolia in the late eleventh century.³³ This is told in a passage dealing with the martyr's birthday festival in June, but any difficulties preventing the celebration of such a festival in summer must obviously have been even more serious for his regular festival in January.

When the cult was taken up again, in the thirteenth century, it appears to enjoy imperial support from the beginning. The miracles that can be dated in the period from the ninth through twelfth century are concerned either with resolving problems of a private character or with guarding the interests of the martyr's own monastery. In contrast, the dominating role of the martyr in the miracles from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries can be defined as that of a protector of the state and the emperor. The first of the miracles recorded for the imperial period of Trebizond consists in his decisive help to Emperor Andronikos Gidos fighting a Turkish army under a variously identified prince called "the Melik."³⁴ Correspondingly, the miracle collection in which this very broadly narrated story is found—the *Synopsis* by John Lazaropoulos—is introduced by the story of miracles performed to the benefit of the Byzantine emperor Basil II during his Iberian campaigns in the tenth and eleventh centuries.³⁵ In this way the protection of imperial power, whether in Byzantium or in Trebizond, becomes the dominating theme of this collection as a whole.

But there are also a few indications that the popular appeal of the martyrs and the popular support of their cult did in fact remain into the imperial centuries. The most interesting piece of evidence for such a view is a miracle in Lazaropoulos's *Synopsis* which relates an event that took place in Constantinople. A case had been brought to trial before a certain *sakelliou* called Gorgoploutos, and as witnesses three merchants from Trebizond were summoned who would only take oaths by St. Eugenios and who all appeared to bear the martyr's name. Struck by this curious situation, the *sakelliou* wondered "why the Trapezuntines do not invoke any other among all the saints than St. Eugenios and why most of them are called Eugenios."³⁶ The story does indeed seem to say that the martyr

³³ Lazaropoulos, *Logos*, ed. cit., lines 197–205 (p. 214).

³⁴ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 1141ff. (pp. 308–34). For various attempts to identify the Melik, see the editor's commentary on the *Synopsis*, line 1154 (pp. 434f.), with refs.

³⁵ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 19ff. (pp. 246–58). The miracle is embedded in historiographic material that is largely in agreement with the corresponding sections in John Zonaras's *Epitome*, although there are a few notable differences; see St. Lampakes, "Μακεδονική δυναστεία καὶ Μεγαλοκομνηνοί. Σχόλια σχετικά με τὰ ιστορικά στοιχεία στὰ "Θαύματα τοῦ Ἁγίου Εὐγενίου" τοῦ Ἰωάννη—Ἰωσήφ Λαζαρόπουλου," *Σύμμεικτα* 8 (1989): 319–33; Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 47–50. Seeing that the discrepancies between Zonaras and Lazaropoulos needed to be explained, N. M. Panagiotakes set out the interesting hypothesis that Lazaropoulos used one of the lost sources listed in the proem of Skylitzes' *Chronicle*, suggesting the work of Theodore of Sebasteia as a likely option; see Panagiotakes' article "Fragments of a Lost Eleventh Century Byzantine Historical Work?" in C. Constantinides, ed., *Φιλέλλην. Studies in Honour of Robert Browning* (Venice, 1996), 321–57.

³⁶ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 1839–41 (p. 348).

enjoyed great popularity in his city. It has been observed that this is in contradiction to the striking rarity of the name Eugenios among the population of the hilly hinterland of Trebizond, the Matzouka valley, as reflected in the Acts of Vazelon.³⁷ But the observed contradiction is real only on the assumption that the event told in the story about the *sakelliou* Gorgoploutos took place some time in the imperial centuries of Trebizond.³⁸ This is by no means certain. As noted above, the collections of Lazaropoulos include—and are indeed dominated by—material from various earlier periods. In the case of this miracle, the eleventh century would be a more likely date than any time after the thirteenth century.³⁹ The story would then testify to a popularity and influence that the martyr once enjoyed, although this belonged to the past when the miracle was written down in the form in which we have it.

The impression that the cult of St. Eugenios had a strictly local character is overwhelming in all periods of its history. Its development, after the establishment of the empire of Trebizond, in the direction of a cult with official status and under imperial patronage rather contributed to emphasize this character, and even added a national note to it. This situation is graphically illustrated by the prescriptions for the celebration of the martyrs' festival which are found in the typikon of St. Eugenios's monastery. Preparations are to begin two days before the festival by singing the vespers, "when everybody has gathered at the monastery, the emperor with the entire senate, the archbishop of the city, the bishops, the *hegoumenoi* of the other monasteries and their monks, along with the clergy and all the Christian people." Then the martyrs' relics are to be brought from their casket in the monastery to the metochion in the city in a procession "led by the emperor and all the people." On the morning of 20 January, again "the emperor, the archbishop, the bishops, the *hegoumenoi*, and the entire pious people" are to gather at the metochion and bring the relics back to the monastery in a new procession. There the celebration will continue, in a manner usual for any saint's feast, with a vigil in the night of 21 January.⁴⁰ The heavy presence of all important representatives of the secular and ecclesiastical powers is striking here. It transforms, as it were, the celebration into a state ceremony that seems to reflect the close alliance between the martyr and the emperor that prevailed after the successful cooperation that brought Andronikos Gidos his victory over the Melik.

Although there is every reason to stress the fact, repeatedly emphasized above, that the cult of St. Eugenios was bound to his native Trebizond, there is some evidence, modest and

³⁷ Thus A. Bryer, "Rural Society in Matzouka," in A. Bryer and H. Lowry, eds., *Continuity and Change in Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman Society* (Birmingham–Washington, D.C., 1986), 53–95 (= A. Bryer, *Peoples and Settlement in Anatolia and the Caucasus* [London, 1988], no. XII), here 78; Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 292 note 248.

³⁸ In *PLP* (no. 4307) no attempt is made to narrow down the date of the *sakelliou* within the limits of the Palaiologan period.

³⁹ The name of the Constantinopolitan *sakelliou* is a point of importance here. Apart from that person the *PLP* lists only one Gorgoploutos, a *paroikos* living near Strymon (no. 4308). In contrast, three persons of that name are attested for the short period of 1025–81: A. Kazhdan, *Sotsialnyi sostav gosподstviushchego klassa Vizantii XI–XII vv.* (Moscow, 1974), 120. Relevant to the date of this story is also the fact that the immediately preceding and following miracles may be dated to roughly the same period. See also the commentary on the miracle in Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 465.

⁴⁰ *Typikon*, ed. Dmitrievskij (as above, note 31): πάντων συναχθέντων ἐν τῇ μονῇ, τοῦ τε βασιλέως μετὰ πάσης τῆς συγκλήτου, τοῦ ἀρχιερέως τῆς πόλεως, τῶν ἐπισκόπων, τῶν ἡγουμένων τῶν λοιπῶν μοναστηρίων καὶ μοναχῶν μετὰ παντός τε τοῦ κλήρου καὶ τοῦ χριστιανύμου λαοῦ, κτλ.

sometimes difficult to interpret, that it might have reached outside this city and even outside the Pontos. A firm piece of evidence is the fact that his *Passio* was translated into Armenian, at an unknown date that was at least no later than the eleventh century (this is the date of the earliest manuscript).⁴¹ This may indicate no more than that such a translation of the basic document of the cult was needed among the monastery's Armenian connections. At least in the ninth and tenth centuries, Armenians with an interest in the Trapezuntine monastery were found in the city of Paipert (modern Bayburt) on the Anatolian plateau, and the monastery possessed estates in the area. We learn a few things about this in the works by John Lazaropoulos, who also reveals that it was necessary for the martyr himself sometimes to speak Armenian.⁴² But as far as we can judge, the Armenian interests in the martyr's monastery were due to personal and economic ties. The details largely remain unclear, but the circumstances seem to reflect the cult's and the monastery's semiprivate character during a certain period of its history.⁴³ This, rather than any attempts to widen the geographic circles from which a successful recruitment of worshipers and pilgrims could be expected, is the most likely context for the Armenian translation of the *Passio*. And whatever the truth here, it must be remembered that throughout the Middle Ages Armenians were a strong or dominating ethnic element in the Pontic region, the city of Trebizond not excepted.

Another piece of evidence of some radiation of the cult outside Trebizond is provided by Constantine Loukites, a born Constantinopolitan active as court official in Trebizond in the first half of the fourteenth century. Loukites mentions, in his *Enkomion* of St. Eugenios, that a church in Cyprus was dedicated to the martyr and that his festival was celebrated there.⁴⁴ This is in fact the only specific point in a passage in which Loukites tries to demonstrate the worldwide fame of Eugenios. There is no reason to doubt this piece of information, but unfortunately, in the absence of a context and of any additional details, it will remain difficult to evaluate.

As a final piece of evidence, mention must be made of a reliquary of Eugenios and his three companions in the treasury of San Marco in Venice, on which more will be said below. Suffice it to say here that, whatever the context in which this reliquary was brought to Venice, it is likely to have played its role there at a formal, official level in state or church rather than as an object of popular piety and pilgrimage.

The collections of St. Eugenios's miracles are a rich source for this locally based cult. As has already appeared, this situation is in curious contrast to the case of a martyr such as Eustratios of Aauraka, whose cult is known to have been widely popular and of which we still have so little evidence of the everyday reality at the cult center, evidence of the kind that miracle stories normally provide. The surviving miracles of St. Eugenios present a stream of visitors to the martyr's monastery and church, seeking the various kinds of help that people usually seek from holy martyrs. Still, as far as pilgrimage is concerned, this rich material must be characterized in rather negative terms. Actually, if we define the word

⁴¹ B. Martin-Hisard, "Trébizonde et le culte de saint Eugène (6e–11e s.)," *REArm*, n.s. 14 (1980): 307–43, esp. 319–21; an annotated French translation of the Armenian version was published by the same scholar: Martin-Hisard, "Les textes anonymes," 164–85.

⁴² Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 652–62 (p. 282).

⁴³ Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 71–72.

⁴⁴ Loukites, *Enkomion*, ed. cit., lines 857–61 (p. 164), with commentary on p. 371.

“pilgrim” as a person who travels to a place with the specific intention of paying reverence to a saint in his or her shrine, no pilgrims visiting St. Eugenios in Trebizond are recorded in the miracles. As far as this fairly large material permits any conclusions, virtually all visitors to St. Eugenios were either Trapezuntines—especially people with a connection of some kind to the martyr’s monastery—or foreigners who visited Trebizond with purposes quite other than pilgrimage. In that sense they may be said to come to the monastery by chance. This does not mean that pilgrims in the narrow sense of the word are absent from these stories. Some do appear, but they appear in the margin: these pilgrims are monks traveling not to St. Eugenios in Trebizond but to Jerusalem.⁴⁵

It is impossible to say whether the impression that Eugenios was unable to attract any other pilgrims than those who were already present in Trebizond, or even—to use a slight exaggeration—in the monastery itself, reflects the real situation. This impression may be due to the fact that the preserved material is not wholly representative. The latter could, in turn, be due either to chance or to a deliberate selection of material. As mentioned above, a shift in the focus of the cult took place after the thirteenth century, and as we have them, the vast majority of the miracles of Eugenios were collected and “edited” at a time when this development was finished. It is not unlikely that the material has been subject to selection, especially at the last stage of the transmission of the texts, and in fact this heterogeneous corpus of miracles seems to have undergone various manipulations in order to adjust the texts to certain purposes.⁴⁶ However, that the suppression of evidence for pilgrimage should have been one of these purposes is, of course, highly unlikely; indeed, the opposite would be expected. At all events, as far as we are informed by these sources—whatever the real background of the situation they seem to reflect—we must say that those pilgrims to St. Eugenios of whom we have any knowledge did not travel farther than from the city of Trebizond to the martyr’s shrine on the steep hillside east of the city wall.

The cases in which pilgrimage in this sense is involved as the primary reason for the visitors’ presence at the shrine are best represented in the small collection by John Xiphilinos. In that sense, as in many others, the stories found there present a different picture from that which emerges from the fourteenth-century collections by John Lazaropoulos.⁴⁷

One of the miracles told by Xiphilinos is to the benefit of the city of Trebizond collectively rather than to any individual (Mir. 10).⁴⁸ Of the rest, five are about people permanently living in Trebizond. There is the writer’s own brother Michael (Mir. 1).⁴⁹ There is a certain Porphyrios, who was obviously too ill to be able to visit the shrine and instead was healed in his home, by touching the martyr’s cross, which sometimes appears as an efficacious relic (Mir. 2).⁵⁰ There is further an anonymous woman hailing, perhaps, from Lazia (Mir. 7).⁵¹ There is a certain Michael (not the writer’s brother with the same name), who fell ill while traveling in Syria (Mir. 8).⁵² And there is an anonymous man hailing from

⁴⁵ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 627 (p. 280) and 1010ff. (p. 302).

⁴⁶ For a discussion of these questions, see Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 43–47.

⁴⁷ This aspect is further developed in Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 28–30.

⁴⁸ Xiphilinos, *Miracles*, ed. cit., lines 473ff. (pp. 198–200).

⁴⁹ Xiphilinos, *Miracles*, ed. cit., lines 42ff. (pp. 172–76).

⁵⁰ Xiphilinos, *Miracles*, ed. cit., lines 131ff. (pp. 176–78).

⁵¹ Xiphilinos, *Miracles*, ed. cit., lines 330ff. (pp. 188–90).

⁵² Xiphilinos, *Miracles*, ed. cit., lines 356ff. (pp. 190–94).

Klaudiopolis, who is saved in a storm at sea by using holy oil from a lamp above the martyr's tomb which he brings with him absorbed in a wick (Mir. 9).⁵³ The four remaining miracles are about foreigners, all of whom happen to be staying in Trebizond when they are affected by illness or other grievances. One is Niketas, general in the city of Soteropolis, in Abchazia (Mir. 3).⁵⁴ Further, there are, interestingly enough, three Russian mercenary soldiers from an army detachment mustering near Trebizond (Mir. 4–6).⁵⁵ As pilgrims, these soldiers would be strange figures, not least because they are obviously not Christian.⁵⁶ Even more strange is the fact that one of them decides to remain in the monastery, although we do not learn in what capacity.⁵⁷ Parallels in other texts seem to support the idea that he should have become a monk, although one would expect this to have been expressed more clearly.

In Lazaropoulos's two collections there are thirty-seven separate miracles. Outsiders, in the sense of people without any connection to the monastery and its community, rarely appear in these stories. When they do appear, they do not come as pilgrims by their own choice but rather in a capacity that has something to do with the monastery—administrative or fiscal, for example—although they suddenly find themselves in need of the martyr's help.

The four miracles in Lazaropoulos's first collection, the *Logos*, have one peculiar thing in common: they are all about people who eventually get the martyr's help to solve problems that he himself has created as punishment for their lack of respect for him. For example, a man from Constantinople called Dionysios was asked to "edit" a collection of the martyr's miracles (which seems, in effect, to mean doing the job that John Lazaropoulos eventually did). When he refused, he was punished with a disease that threatened to kill him, and he only survived because the martyr intervened at the last moment (Mir. 2).⁵⁸ In the end, the martyr's treatment of Dionysios turns out to be purely disciplinary as he tells the man, rather cynically, that after all he has no need of his services as a writer.⁵⁹ Another example in point is the "assessor" Methodios who, apparently in the mid-eleventh century, used the monastery as a temporary residence and was punished for his way of exploiting the monks by being beaten up, very harshly, by Eugenios's young companion Akylas. The story ends with Methodios finding the cure for his wounds by applying the martyr's holy oil (Mir. 5).⁶⁰

The desired effect of such stories seems to have been the perpetration of the plans and wishes of the monastic community by inspiring terror in those who tried to stand in their way. Often those plans and wishes appear to be connected to the monastery's economy. In fact, if we look for any specialization in the martyr's way of actually working miracles, the most striking one would be his care for his own monastery's economic interests and

⁵³ Xiphilinos, *Miracles*, ed. cit., lines 421ff. (pp. 194–98).

⁵⁴ Xiphilinos, *Miracles*, ed. cit., lines 166ff. (pp. 178–82).

⁵⁵ Xiphilinos, *Miracles*, ed. cit., lines 206ff. (pp. 182–88).

⁵⁶ This seems to be true at least about one of the men involved; Xiphilinos, *Miracles*, ed. cit., lines 218ff. (p. 182), with commentary on p. 376.

⁵⁷ Xiphilinos, *Miracles*, ed. cit., line 261 (p. 184), with commentary on pp. 376f.

⁵⁸ Lazaropoulos, *Logos*, ed. cit., lines 432ff. (pp. 228–30).

⁵⁹ Lines 472f. (p. 230), τῶν δ' ἐγκωμίων ἡδὴ τῆς συγγραφῆς, ἧς ὁμολόγησας δρᾶν, οὗτοι χρεῖα ἐμοί.

⁶⁰ Lazaropoulos, *Logos*, ed. cit., lines 606ff. (pp. 238–42).

prosperity.⁶¹ It is difficult to see how such miracles could have contributed to attracting pilgrims to the martyr's shrine. Rather, if potential pilgrims happened to read them or hear about them, they may well have been discouraged from paying any visits at all to the monastery.

The second collection compiled by John Lazaropoulos, the *Synopsis*, is much more comprehensive and much more variegated than the first. It consists of thirty-three chapters of various lengths. The two most extensive ones—to which reference has already been made above—deal with “political” or “military” miracles aimed at emphasizing and enhancing the martyr's role as patron of the empire of Trebizond. Of the thirty-one stories that remain, twenty are about monks or other persons connected to the martyr's own monastery (Mir. 2, 3, 6–12, 15–17, 20, 21, 24–27, 29, 32).⁶² These miracles reveal the same tendency as those found in the first collection, in that their point is to show the martyr as a guardian of the monastery's interests, economically and otherwise.

The remaining eleven stories are those that interest us most here. We meet in them five men and six women of various social backgrounds. Most are born Trapezuntines. One of them is a certain Eumorphia, wife of a *spatharokandidatos* called Eustratios, who apparently lived in Trebizond and whom Eugenios healed from excessive menstruation (Mir. 4).⁶³ Eumorphia is treated in a similar way as Dionysios and the assessor Methodios who were just mentioned. When she shows some hesitance in delivering a votive gift to the monastery—a golden lamp made from her bridal gifts—the martyr punishes her by, so to speak, withdrawing his healing until the gift is secured. While the task imposed upon Dionysios, the editing of Eugenios's miracles, appeared to be of no interest to the martyr when his punishment had restored the man's respect for him, the precious object required from Eumorphia does not lose its interest until it has been delivered to his monastery.

There is further Barbara, the wife of an anonymous *kouropalates*, who is relieved from a leech that she has swallowed (Mir. 5).⁶⁴ There is the childless couple George Magoulas and his wife, who are given a son by Eugenios, a son whom they name after the martyr (Mir. 14).⁶⁵ And there is the wife of the *spatharokandidatos* Thomas Chardamoukles who is healed from a heavy cyst in her uterus (Mir. 22).⁶⁶ Finally, there is Leontia, wife of the *spatharokandidatos* George Arbenos, who is cured of consumption (Mir. 18).⁶⁷ Her story has a special interest. She begins by visiting the church of St. Nicholas, to whom her mother Maria was especially devoted. But to Maria's disappointment St. Nicholas leaves her daughter without help. Instead he advises her to go to the church of St. Eugenios, referring to the fact that the latter is a specialist in diseases accompanied by fever and convulsions. In another miracle, Leontia's daughter Barbara is cured from a similar disease (Mir. 19).⁶⁸

⁶¹ See further Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 69–71.

⁶² Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 241ff. (pp. 258–64), lines 448ff. (pp. 270–88), lines 820ff. (pp. 290–98), lines 999ff. (pp. 300–306), lines 1600ff. (pp. 334–46), lines 1869ff. (p. 350), lines 1958ff. (pp. 354–56).

⁶³ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 351ff. (pp. 264–68).

⁶⁴ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 417ff. (pp. 268–70).

⁶⁵ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 794ff. (p. 290).

⁶⁶ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 1087ff. (pp. 306–8).

⁶⁷ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 954ff. (pp. 298–300).

⁶⁸ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 991ff. (p. 300).

The way in which this specialization is presented seems to indicate that it was an essential element in the miracle-working of Eugenios and therefore ought to have played an important role in determining the pilgrims' choice of shrine to visit, in a way similar to that in which St. Artemios in Constantinople, who specialized in hernia, attracted pilgrims suffering from that disease. But apart from the two miracles about Leontia and her daughter Barbara, there are in the entire material only one or two additional examples that could support such an idea.⁶⁹ This may be a point in which losses in the tradition of the miracles—whether by deliberate choice or by chance—can be held responsible for a somewhat distorted image of the situation. It seems, however, unlikely that a tradition in a better state of preservation would have changed this impression in a radical way. I would rather suggest that the lack of a decided profile that, in spite of what St. Nicholas tells Leontia and her daughter, seems to characterize the martyr's healing activities reflects a certain half-heartedness in the monastery's attitude to pilgrimage.

There are only two non-Trapezuntines in these eleven stories, and both are imperial civil servants. One is a tax collector called Theodoulos, who has been robbed of a large amount of collected money and has the thief revealed by the martyr (Mir. 30).⁷⁰ The other is Pothos, judge of the theme of Chaldia, who is saved by the martyr from a burning house (Mir. 33).⁷¹ What emerges, then, from these miracles is hardly the picture of a successful pilgrimage center, and, as we have seen, any corresponding ambitions seem rarely to have been operative in the monastery's history. On the few occasions when such ambitions developed, perhaps twice over a period of some four hundred years, the resulting attempts to attract more numerous crowds of pilgrims seem to have failed. If the first of these attempts, that is, the introduction of the birthday festival, was real—something about which I have serious doubts—its success was stopped by the difficult situation after the Seljuk invasion in the eleventh century. This situation meant a decisive blow to the shrine of St. Eustratios at Arauraka, which relied heavily on its pilgrims.⁷² The monastery of St. Eugenios in Trebizond may have experienced similar difficulties. But to the Trapezuntine institution the invasion had another important consequence: it prevented the monastery from exploiting its estates on the Anatolian plain, which up to this period used to form its economic backbone.⁷³ The interest in economic matters that is so apparent in the miracles could indicate that the latter problem was felt to be more severe than the former.

The ensuing decline was broken, and the monastery of St. Eugenios began to play a more important role after the establishment of the empire of Trebizond in or shortly after 1204. Now its prosperity relied on a different foundation: imperial patronage of the martyr, who was now officially regarded as the patron of Trebizond, the city and the empire.

⁶⁹ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., Mir. 8, lines 527ff. (pp. 274–77), about two monks stricken by fever as a consequence of drinking bad wine; and Mir. 24, lines 1600ff. (pp. 334–39), about John Lazaropoulos himself, "stricken by fever and heartburn and continuous vomiting." The fact that these cases are so rare is in curious contradiction to the fact—pointed out by V. Déroche in his review of Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, in *REB* 58 (2000): 321–23, esp. 322—that the specialization chosen by Eugenios covers virtually the majority of all diseases.

⁷⁰ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 1890ff. (pp. 350–52).

⁷¹ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 1982ff. (pp. 356–58).

⁷² Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 166–70.

⁷³ Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 84–85 and 412, with refs.

As pointed out above, the two most conspicuous and most extensively narrated miracles in the collections compiled by John Lazaropoulos were performed to the benefit of emperors—Basil II of Byzantium and Andronikos Gidos of Trebizond—acting as leaders of military campaigns. In these stories the martyr intervened not in response to prayers offered at his shrine, but being called upon from the battlefield. The monastery now played its most important role in the political life of the city. Only to a limited degree does it seem to have revived its position as the center of a popular cult, at least for local worshippers.

Among the few Pontic foundations associated with St. Eugenios, the most important is, of course, this monastery outside the city wall of Trebizond, with its still standing church where the relics of the martyrs were preserved. At least in the imperial centuries, the monastery had a metochion inside the city walls, a foundation that has since disappeared. We know something about it primarily thanks to the typikon of 1346.⁷⁴ Only about the monastery and its metochion can we say that they played an active part in the martyr's cult.

Otherwise, the monumental and iconographic evidence for the cult of St. Eugenios is scarce, but can be supplemented, to some degree, with textual evidence about such objects. To judge from a miracle in the *Synopsis* of John Lazaropoulos, there seems, not surprisingly, to have been a big picture of the standing Eugenios in his own church, dominating a place of its own. We do not know what it was like—although the appearance of the martyr in visions might offer a clue—and still less when it was made, although we know that it was found there before 1223,⁷⁵ and may guess that it was restored or renewed several times over the centuries, for example, after the fire that may have partly destroyed the church in 1340.⁷⁶ The miracles also tell us about a votive church near a place called Kouratoreion, in the district of Kapalin in the Matzouka valley south of Trebizond. It was obviously erected in or immediately after 1223, and appears still to have been standing when Lazaropoulos wrote the miracles in the 1360s.⁷⁷ That an image of the martyr was part of the decoration of this church is a reasonable guess.

To these scraps of textual evidence we can add a piece of information found in a thirteenth-century document included in the Vazelon Acts. We there learn of the existence of a site—perhaps a church—called St. Eugenios near a place called Epikopra in Matzouka, but apart from the fact that it existed the document provides no further information about it.⁷⁸ If the reference is to a church, there is a slight possibility that it is identical with the votive church in the district of Kapalin mentioned in the preceding paragraph. In any case, we may again guess that St. Eugenios appeared in it, in some pictorial form or other.

A few additional monuments that testify to the position of Eugenios have been recorded in modern times or are still existing. They are all located either in the city of Trebizond or in the Matzouka valley to the south. Thus in the tower chapel of the monastery of Hagia Sophia of Trebizond there is a painting reproducing Eugenios as a courtier, hold-

⁷⁴ See above, note 31.

⁷⁵ See esp. Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., line 1556 (p. 332), where a Muslim prince refers to this picture for identification of the martyr in a dream—an event datable to 1222/23—and cf. commentary on p. 455.

⁷⁶ Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 223–24.

⁷⁷ Lazaropoulos, *Synopsis*, ed. cit., lines 1475–79 (p. 328), with commentary on p. 453.

⁷⁸ F. I. Uspenskii and V. Beneshevich, eds., *Vazelonskie akty* (Leningrad, 1927), no. 117, p. 87, τὸ ἐναντὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Εὐγενίου.

ing what is probably a tall cross.⁷⁹ The paintings of this chapel are dated to 1443. The fact that the thirteenth-century monastery of Hagia Sophia was an imperial foundation, and that the tower chapel was a semiprivate room, inaccessible to the public, puts Eugenios in a context suitable for the official patron of the empire of Trebizond rather than for the hero of a popular cult with attraction for pilgrims.

In a chapel of the imperial palace of Trebizond, an image is recorded of a holy soldier who was probably St. Eugenios.⁸⁰ The date of the painting is unknown but ought to have been in the imperial centuries of Trebizond. Similarly to the case of the picture in the Hagia Sophia monastery, the setting of the palace image indicates the presence of imperial patronage rather than the context of a popular cult.

In a cave church near the martyr's monastery in Trebizond, a painting of a cloaked figure is reported to have been seen in the late nineteenth century. According to one report, which is unfortunately contradicted by another, there was an inscription that could be interpreted as identifying the figure as St. Eugenios.⁸¹

In the chapel of Elijah at the monastery of Vazelon in Matzouka there is—or at least there was until ca. 1970—probably the best of the preserved wall paintings of Eugenios. He is represented as a soldier, with a military tunic, a cloak, and a shield. The date could be the late thirteenth/early fourteenth century.⁸² His appearance is similar to that of a miniature found in the typikon of his monastery, a manuscript already referred to above.⁸³

In the so-called "Upper Church" at Sarmaşıklı in Matzouka, St. Eugenios is painted as a courtier carrying a tall cross. The date is the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. The site may have been a holding of the Vazelon monastery. If that was actually the case, Eugenios may have played some role at that monastery.⁸⁴

A church dedicated to St. Eugenios at a place called Giannanton in Matzouka is now destroyed but is known to have been decorated with paintings that were probably medieval.⁸⁵ It must be expected that the dedicatory saint was found in these paintings.

It will come as no surprise that Eugenios only rarely appears on lead seals. Two private seals may be noted. One belonged to a member of the Galaton family and is dated to the second third of the eleventh century.⁸⁶ The other belonged to a certain Theodosios.⁸⁷ In contrast to the way in which Eugenios of Trebizond is represented in most images, the saint of this seal is beardless, appearing half-length and holding a tall cross in his right hand.

⁷⁹ Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 236 and fig. 73, where the object in Eugenios's right hand is reconstructed as a lance. This seems less likely, both in view of the fact that the martyr appears as a courtier and in view of the iconographic parallel at Sarmaşıklı mentioned below.

⁸⁰ Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 215, no. 55.

⁸¹ Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 224f.

⁸² Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 292 and pl. 225c in vol. 2.

⁸³ Metropolitan Chrysanthos [Philippides], *Ἡ ἐκκλησία Τραπεζοῦντος* (Athens, 1933) = *Ἀρχ.Πόντ.* 4/5 (1933): pl. 21, with description on p. 415 (repeated, as a frontispiece, in Lampsides, *Ἅγιος Εὐγένιος ὁ πολιεύχος*).

⁸⁴ Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 273f. and fig. 83.

⁸⁵ Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 294, no. 29.

⁸⁶ J.-C. Cheynet, C. Morrisson, and W. Seibt, *Les sceaux byzantins de la collection Henri Seyrig* (Paris, 1991), 62, referring to V. Laurent's unedited catalogue of the seals in the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass., no. 57.

⁸⁷ G. Zacos, *Byzantine Seals*, vol. 2 (Berne, 1984), no. 787.

The seal is not dated by the editors, except for the collective dating valid for the whole of the chapter in which it appears, namely, “early 10th century–1204.” In the circumstances, a safe identification—the Trapezuntine or the Araurakan martyr, or some other saint—is not possible in these two cases. If indeed we are dealing with Eugenios of Trebizond, Theodosios as well as the member of the Galaton family should be supposed to have had some connection to Trebizond.⁸⁸

The martyr is absent from the ecclesiastical seals of Trebizond. This may seem surprising but is explained by the fact that he was not the dedicatory saint of the cathedral church of Trebizond, the Chrysokephalos, which was dedicated to the Virgin.⁸⁹ In contrast, Eugenios appears on the seals of the Grand Komnenoi, although very few examples have been discovered.⁹⁰ Their iconography, with both the emperor and the saint represented on horseback, indicates a connection with the new type of aspers that were struck from the reign of the Grand Komnenos Alexios II (1297–1330) and thus a reasonably safe *terminus post quem* (see further below). Although of very limited significance, the seals would in any case confirm the picture of the cult of Eugenios that emerges from the rest of the evidence: it was before 1204 that this cult was really alive. General considerations would even suggest dating the seal, if Trapezuntine, before the mid-eleventh century. Apparently the official support that Eugenios enjoyed in the empire of Trebizond after 1204 did not make him more popular as a sealing saint than he had been.

The Trapezuntine silver coins—the aspers—from the imperial centuries are, unlike the seals, an important source for the iconography of the martyr: in terms of number, by far the richest source of all. At the same time their significance in the context that is in focus here is rather limited. To begin with iconography, two successive types can be recognized in these coins. In the first, the martyr appears, on the reverse, as a standing figure, represented frontally and holding in his right hand a tall staff surmounted by a cross, while the emperor appears in a similar, frontal position on the obverse.⁹¹ In the second type the martyr, on the reverse, appears as a holy rider on a horse turned right and holding his staff surmounted by a cross, while on the obverse the emperor appears on horseback in a similar way.⁹² The second type was introduced by the Grand Komnenos Alexios II in the early fourteenth century and remained in use until the end of the Trapezuntine empire. Around the time of its introduction in Trebizond, similar designs seem to have been in vogue around the Black Sea. Perhaps, however, it should also be connected more specifically with a wish of Alexios II to be visualized in this way. That would be a natural implication of the story about his killing a dragon that is included in John Lazaropoulos’s *Logos*, and to which

⁸⁸ The two members of the family recorded in the *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit, Erste Abt. (641–867)* (Berlin–New York, 1999), nos. 1928 (8th century) and 1929 (9th century), did not have any such connections.

⁸⁹ Noted by J.-C. Cheynet and C. Morisson, “Texte et image sur les sceaux byzantins: Les Raisons d’un choix iconographique,” in N. Oikonomides, ed., *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 4 (Washington, D.C., 1994), 9–32, here 22 note 51.

⁹⁰ Published by A. Vishniakova, *VestDrIst* 6 (1939): no. 1, p. 121 (ref. by N. Oikonomides in *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 3 [Washington, D.C., 1993], 173). Another seal inscribed with the name Κομνηνός and bearing the effigies of an unidentified man on horseback on each side most probably belongs to the same or a similar type; published in *Otchety Arkheologicheskoi komissii* (1895): 94 (ref. by Oikonomides, *ibid.*).

⁹¹ O. Retowski, *Die Münzen der Komnenen von Trapezunt*, 2d ed. (Braunschweig, 1974), pls. 1–x (pp. 193–202).

⁹² Retowski, *Die Münzen*, 135–36, pls. xi–xiv (pp. 203–6).

reference has already been made.⁹³ The close connection between the martyr and the emperor in the coins gives emphasis to the character of the coins at large: they were a means of imperial propaganda rather than vehicles or objects of popular piety. Their function was to propagate the martyr as officially recognized protector and patron of the empire and its ruler, and to support his position not as an object of pilgrimage but as an object of worship imposed by the state on its subjects.

The same iconography of St. Eugenios as that found in the Trapezuntine aspers after Alexios II also appears in a more unusual context. This is a stamped roundel decorating the leather binding of a Trapezuntine manuscript, a *sticherarion* dated 1365 that is now found at the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai.⁹⁴ The manuscript was written by a certain George Referendarios in the monastery of St. Eugenios, ἐντὸς μὲν τοῦ θεοφρουρήτου κάστρου Τραπεζοῦντος.⁹⁵ Obviously the quoted words cannot refer to the monastery proper, which is not situated inside the city walls.⁹⁶ Rather the metochion must be meant, and although the evidence of this single manuscript is narrow, it could be taken to indicate the existence in the fourteenth century of a scriptorium at the metochion of St. Eugenios. Perhaps the stamped roundel with the mounted martyr on the leather cover at Sinai was used by the metochion as a mark of ownership.

In striking contrast to the warriorlike rider in these images, Eugenios and his companions appear in an unambiguously civilian setting in a splendid icon in the Dionysiou monastery of Mount Athos. This icon is double-sided, and its main face shows Alexios III Grand Komnenos, holding a model of a church in his left hand, and John the Baptist, that is, the donor and the dedicatory saint of the monastery, respectively (Fig. 1). Alexios is clearly recognizable from his famous chrysobull of September 1374, although the icon painter has given him a fuller beard. The reverse of the icon shows, from left to right, Sts. Kanidios, Eugenios, Valerianos, and Akylas (Fig. 2). The martyrs are highly individualized: Kanidios with grizzled hair and beard; Eugenios, with a jeweled chlamys that sets him off as the leading figure, and with black hair and beard arranged in a fashion strikingly similar to his appearance in the typikon of his monastery in the Vatopedi manuscript of 1346;⁹⁷ Valerianos with reddish hair and beard; and the young Akylas beardless and youthful.⁹⁸

It is a reasonable guess that this icon is connected to the donation documented in the chrysobull of 1374, most likely as an additional gift to the monastery. It is not mentioned in this document; one may assume that it was too insignificant to fit into a context dominated by arrangements for the housing and the long-term support of the monks. But Alexios devoted some attention to Trapezuntine pilgrims coming to Dionysiou, stating in his

⁹³ Lazaropoulos, *Logos*, ed. cit., lines 303ff. (p. 220); cf. *ibid.*, Introduction, 79f.

⁹⁴ Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 224.

⁹⁵ Bishop Porfirii (Uspenskii), *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum graecorum qui in monasterio Sanctae Catharinae in monte Sina asservantur*, ed. by V. Beneshevich, vol. 1 (St. Petersburg, 1911), 159. For George Referendarios, see Bryer and Winfield, *Monuments and Topography*, 224; Rosenqvist, *Hagiographic Dossier*, 83–84 and 89–90.

⁹⁶ R. Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (Paris, 1975), 269 note 3, observed the difficulty but thought that it could be resolved by means of a nonliteral interpretation of the phrase.

⁹⁷ Reproduced in Chrysanthos, Ἡ ἐκκλησία Τραπεζοῦντος (as above, note 83).

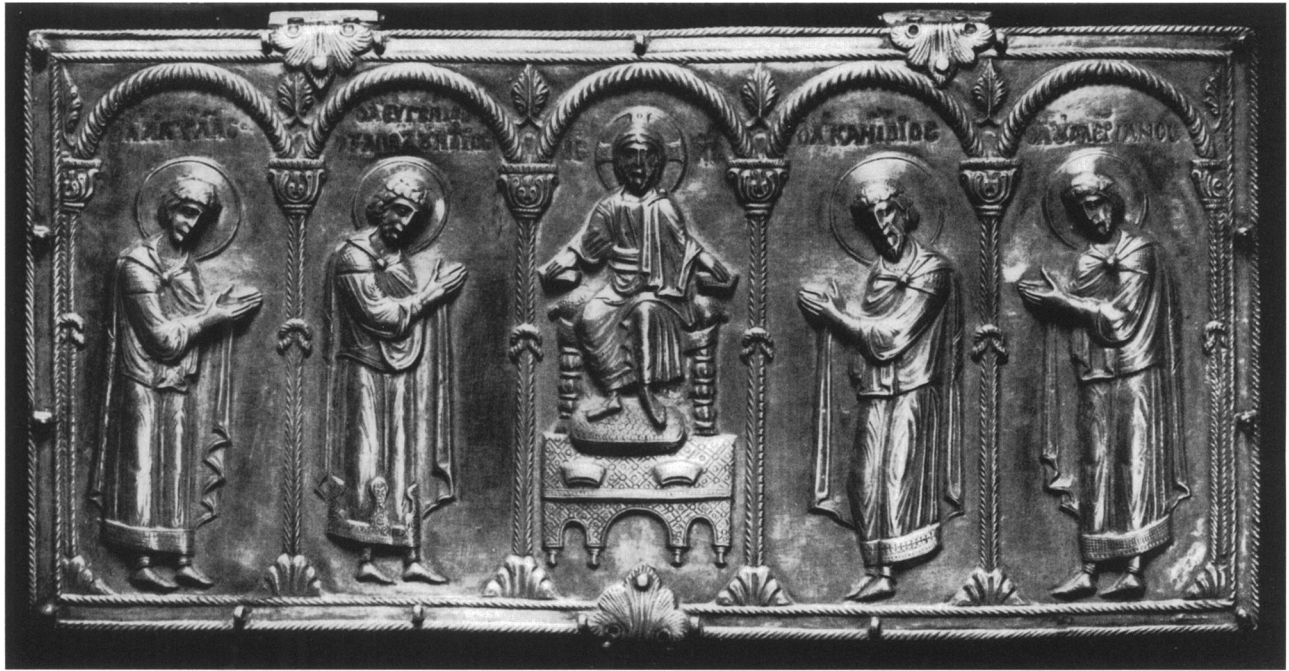
⁹⁸ Description by E. N. Tsigaridas, in *Treasures of Mount Athos* (Thessalonike, 1997), 95–98, with color plates on pp. 96–97 (in addition, the obverse is reproduced on the dustcover of this publication). Tsigaridas notes the similarity of the two portraits of Alexios but not the similarity of the two pictures of Eugenios.



- 1 Double-sided icon, main face, Dionysiou monastery, Mount Athos, ca. 1374
(after A. Karakatsanis, ed., *Treasures of Mount Athos* [Thessalonike, 1997], 2.29: 96)



2 Double-sided icon, reverse, Dionysiou monastery, Mount Athos, ca. 1374
(after *Treasures of Mount Athos* [Thessalonike, 1997], 2.29: 97)



3 Reliquary cover, St. Eugenios and his companions in the Treasury of St. Mark's, Venice, late 14th or early 15th century (after H. R. Hahnloser, ed., *Il Tesoro di San Marco*, vol. 2 [Florence, 1971], pl. xxxi)

regulations for the new foundation that the monks should receive them as benevolently as possible.⁹⁹ These pilgrims would no doubt also have had the opportunity of venerating the martyrs of their homeland in this icon.

Outside Trebizond and the Pontos the iconographic evidence is very meager. The oldest image is of little significance in this context: it is a miniature in the Menologion of Basil II which shows Eugenios being decapitated.¹⁰⁰ The picture is purely conventional and lacks any individual features. The explanation why it is found there at all is perhaps the fact that Eugenios has an entry in the Synaxarion of Constantinople.¹⁰¹ We know nothing of a cult of Eugenios in Constantinople, and nothing indicates that the martyrs are presented in the Menologion (and in the Synaxarion, for that matter) in their capacity as a goal for pilgrimage.

The reliquary of St. Eugenios preserved in the treasury of St. Mark's cathedral in Venice (Fig. 3) has already been mentioned. It is a small box of gilt silver, 28 by 14 cm large and 9 cm high. Its cover is decorated with an image in which the enthroned Christ, in the center, is flanked by the four figures of Eugenios and his three companions waiting to receive their martyrs' crowns, of which Christ is holding one in each hand while the two remaining ones lie ready before his feet. The names of the martyrs are inscribed above their heads: Akylas and Eugenios on Christ's right, Kanidios and Valerianos on his left. In comparison with the Dionysiou icon there is little individualization in the way the martyrs are represented, apart from the fact that Akylas, the youngest of the four, is beardless unlike his three companions. There is an inscription running in two lines along all four sides of the box. It refers to the image of the martyrs receiving their crowns and ends with the following words: "But I, miserable man full of sin, make you mediators of my salvation, for I wish to escape condemnation."¹⁰²

The likely date of the reliquary is now considered to be the end of the fourteenth or the first two thirds of the fifteenth century, a date before the fall of Trebizond in 1461 being more likely than a date thereafter.¹⁰³ Trapezuntine provenance is surmised.

The lack of individualization in the representation of the martyrs could perhaps indicate that, unlike the Dionysiou icon, the reliquary was not produced in close contact with the cult center, where iconographic details and personal facts known from the texts about the martyrs would have been familiar enough to leave more distinct traces on the reliquary. At all events the circumstances in which it was made and the relics brought to Venice are unknown. Various hypotheses have been produced: the reliquary may have been a gift to Venice by a person with a Trapezuntine connection, such as Cardinal Bessarion (perhaps in the context of the donation of his library and a number of other things, among

⁹⁹ Καὶ εἴπερ τινες . . . παραβάλλωσι . . . διὰ θεωρίαν καὶ ἱστορίαν καὶ προσκύνησιν . . . , ὀφείλουσιν οἱ μοναχοὶ ἀσπασίως δέχεσθαι τούτους κτλ.: N. Oikonomidès, ed., *Actes de Dionysiou* (Paris, 1968), 61, lines 60–61.

¹⁰⁰ *Il menologio di Basilio II*, Codices e Vaticanis selecti 8 (Turin, 1907), pl. no. 335.

¹⁰¹ *Synaxarium CP*, 406.24ff.

¹⁰² See the description by A. Frolov, in H. R. Hahnloser, ed., *Il Tesoro di San Marco, sotto gli auspici della Fondazione Giorgio Cini*, vol. 2, *Il tesoro e il museo* (Florence, 1971), 39–40, with pl. xxxi; and that by W. D. Wixom, in D. Buckton, ed., *The Treasure of San Marco, Venice* (Milan, 1984), 201–3. Further, on the inscription more especially, see A.-M. Talbot, "Epigrams in Context: Metrical Inscriptions on Art and Architecture of the Palaiologan Era," *DOP* 53 (1999): 75–90, esp. 83–84.

¹⁰³ Thus Frolov (preceding note), p. 40, with convincing arguments against earlier dates suggested by previous scholars.

which reliquaries are known to have been found); or one of the last Trapezuntine emperors, such as David Grand Komnenos; or some wealthy Trapezuntine family—perhaps one of those that fled to Crete—that wished to entertain good relations with Venice.¹⁰⁴ The idea that the reliquary's presence in Venice has something to do with Cardinal Bessarion may seem attractive. Still, what the context for such a connection was like and what part—if any—the cardinal played in the events remains in the dark.

Did the contents of this reliquary ever attract any pilgrims? If they were brought to Venice from Trebizond, they could well derive from the relics of Eugenios and his companions preserved in the martyrs' church in Trebizond and venerated by pilgrims, local worshipers, and imperial patrons. But we may assume reasonably safely that the Venice reliquary itself never became an object of veneration by the broad pious public. Probably this was not even intended. Whatever the circumstances that brought it to this city, the most likely context for such an object in fifteenth-century Venice would rather be one in which it played a formal role at an official level in state or church.

Indeed, there are some indications that the reliquary may not even have been used for the intended purpose. An inventory of San Marco dated 1634 specifies that it contained the relics of a number of saints, among whom Eugenios and his companions do not appear.¹⁰⁵ We know nothing about what happened to the reliquary from the time it was made up to the year 1634. Still it is difficult to understand why anybody should have removed the relics of the Trapezuntine martyrs from this box—if they were ever found there—and replaced them with the relics of some other saints. I would therefore venture the guess that the relics from Trebizond intended for the reliquary never reached Italy, perhaps as a consequence of the Turkish conquest of Trebizond in 1461.

The fact that the cult of the four martyrs of Trebizond had little success outside the confines of their homeland is hardly surprising. It is more surprising to note the limitations from which their success at home too seems to have suffered. It is true that the monastery dedicated to them was an institution of great local importance. It is also true that in some respects—politically, if not economically—this importance increased after the beginnings of the empire of Trebizond. But as far as our sources allow any conclusions, it must be said that the martyrs' relics and the miracles that these could be hoped to provide had less attraction for pious people in and outside Trebizond than one would expect, and that this situation became especially pronounced after the eleventh century. Although the relics were “richly equipped like treasures, in coffins of silver and gleaming with gold,” as Constantine Loukites described them in his *Enkomion* on the martyrs,¹⁰⁶ few pilgrims appear to have felt the appeal from them and their promises of relief from pain and

¹⁰⁴ All three suggestions are put forward by Frolow, loc. cit., and repeated by Wixom in Buckton, ed., *The Treasure of San Marco*, 203.

¹⁰⁵ See R. Gallo, *Il tesoro di San Marco e la sua storia*, Civiltà Veneziana, Saggi 16 (Venice–Rome, 1967), 314. In addition to the identified relics, it also contained “two ampullas with the blood of anonymous martyrs,” which could possibly derive from the Trapezuntine martyrs (although four ampullas would of course be expected and needed). That would be in agreement with the inscription around the reliquary's sides, of which the first line refers to the blood shed by the martyrs (text in Frolow [as above, note 102], 40; trans. by Talbot, “Epigrams,” 84). It seems, however, rather unlikely that exactly the relics of the four martyrs for whom the reliquary was made should have been left unidentified. Also, the Trapezuntine texts that deal with the relics never mention the blood of the martyrs but their heads (specifically) and bones (implicitly).

¹⁰⁶ Loukites, *Enkomion*, ed. cit., lines 875f. (p. 166).

trouble. During the imperial centuries of Trebizond, support from the emperor and the state strengthened the martyrs'—and especially their leader's—position, although the involvement in local politics at times also proved perilous. Certainly, imperial support was a mighty backing to the monastery. It seems that it was unable, nonetheless, to revive the popular devotion that eventually had been lost.

Postscript

The fact that a seeming lack of dynamism and popular appeal characterizes the cult of St. Eugenios of Trebizond after the eleventh century—compensated for by imperial support from the thirteenth century—has been emphasized in the preceding pages. The picture of this situation as outlined there has considerable lacunas. One would have been filled by an attempt to answer the question, “If Pontic pilgrims, at least after the eleventh century, did not go to the monastery of St. Eugenios, where did they go instead?” This question was addressed in a fascinating paper, “The Pilgrim Monastery of Soumela as an Economic Paradigm,” presented by Anthony Bryer at the 20th International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Paris, in August 2001.¹⁰⁷ According to Bryer, “the authority of Soumela lay . . . in its strategic situation,” and, soon developing into an efficient pilgrim monastery, it left little room for the urban monastery of St. Eugenios to compete. The full publication of Professor Bryer's paper must be awaited for the necessary further insights into the role played by Soumela here. Correspondingly, my own contribution tells, at best, only half the story.

Uppsala Universitet

¹⁰⁷ See *XXe Congrès International des Études Byzantines. Pré-actes. II. Tables Rondes* (Paris, 2001), 90–91.